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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3651st meeting of the Security Council, held on 12 April 1996 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Signature of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (The Treaty of Pelindaba)", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes with deep satisfaction the signature of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (The Treaty of Pelindaba) on 11 April 1996 in Cairo, Egypt, and notes further the adoption of "The Cairo Declaration" on that occasion.

"This historic event marks a successful formalization of the commitment undertaken 32 years ago when the leaders of Africa adopted in July 1964 at Cairo the pioneering resolution of the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, which declared Africa a denuclearized zone.

"The Security Council considers that the signing of the Treaty by more than 40 African countries, as well as the signing of the relevant protocols to the Treaty by the majority of the nuclear-weapons States, constitute important steps towards the effective and early implementation of the Treaty. To that end it emphasizes the importance of early ratification of the Treaty with a view to securing its rapid entry into force.

"The Security Council, reaffirming the statement made by its President on behalf of members of the Council at the meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government on 31 January 1992 (S/23500) that the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security, considers that the signature of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty constitutes an important contribution by the African countries to the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council seizes this occasion to encourage such regional efforts, and stands ready to support efforts on the international and regional level aimed at achieving the universality of the nuclear non-proliferation regime."

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